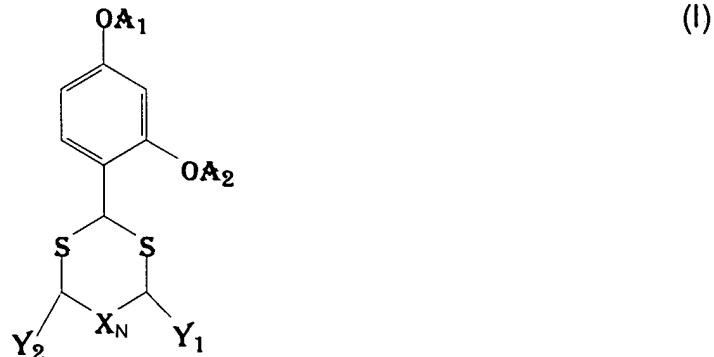


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A cosmetic method of skin lightening comprising applying to the skin a composition comprising:
 - 5 a. about 0.000001 to about 50 % of a compound of general formula I

10



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Wherein

each A_1 and/or A_2 independently is = H, COR, CO₂R ,CONHR where R= C₁-C₁₈ saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon; and
20 each Y_1 and/or Y_2 independently is H, C₁-C₁₈ saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon, or OZ where Z = H, COR¹, CO₂R¹ ,CONHR¹ and wherein R¹= C₁-C₁₈ saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon;
X is Carbon, Nitrogen, Sulfur, or Oxygen; and
N is in integer between 0 and 2.

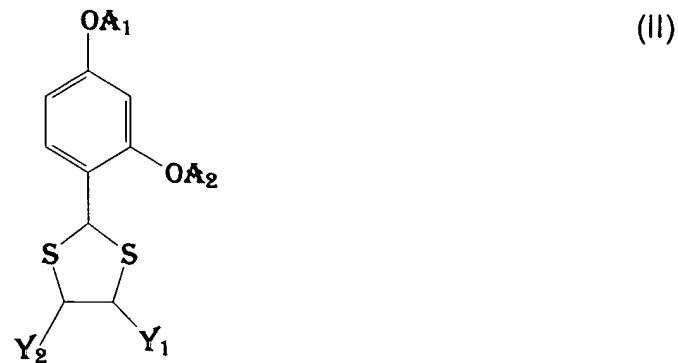
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and

- b. a cosmetically acceptable carrier.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said compound has the general formula II:

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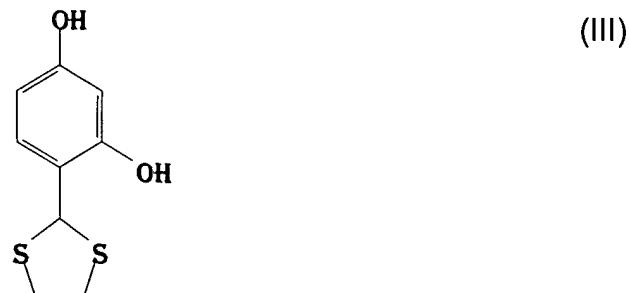


10 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said composition further comprises a
sunscreen.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said compound is a compound of formula III:

15

20



5. The method of claim 4, wherein the hydroxy groups of said compound are
esterified with an acid selected from the group consisting of ferulic acid,
vanillic acid, sebacic acid, azaleic acid, benzoic acid, caffeic acid, coumaric
25 acid, salicylic acid, cysteine, cystine, lactic acid, glycolic acid and mixtures
thereof.

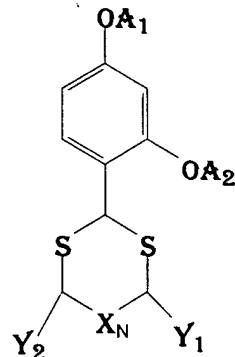
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said composition further comprises a
fragrance.

7. The cosmetic method according to claim 1, wherein said composition further comprises a skin benefit agent selected from the group consisting of alpha-hydroxy acids, beta-hydroxy acids, polyhydroxy acids, hydroquinone, t-butyl hydroquinone, Vitamin C derivatives, dioic acids, retinoids, resorcinol derivatives, and mixtures thereof.

8. A cosmetic composition comprising:
a. about 0.000001 to about 50 % of a compound of general formula I

10 (I)

15



Wherein

20

each A₁ and/or A₂ independently is = H, COR, CO₂R ,CONHR where R= C₁-C₁₈

saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon; and

each Y₁ and/or Y₂ independently is H, C₁-C₁₈ saturated or unsaturated

hydrocarbon, or OZ where Z = H, COR¹, CO₂R¹, CONHR¹ and wherein R¹= C₁-

25

C₁₈ saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon;

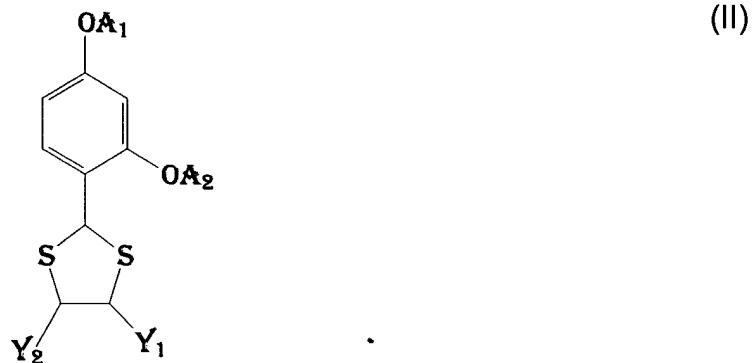
X is Carbon, Nitrogen, Sulfur, or Oxygen;

N is in integer between 0 and 2; and

b. a cosmetically acceptable carrier.

9. The cosmetic composition of claim 8, wherein said compound is a compound of general formula II:

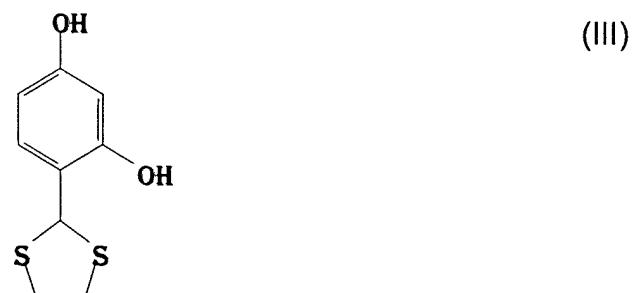
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10. The cosmetic composition of claim 8, wherein said compound is a compound of formula III:

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11. The cosmetic composition of claim 8, wherein said compound comprises about 0.00001 % to about 10 % of said composition.

25

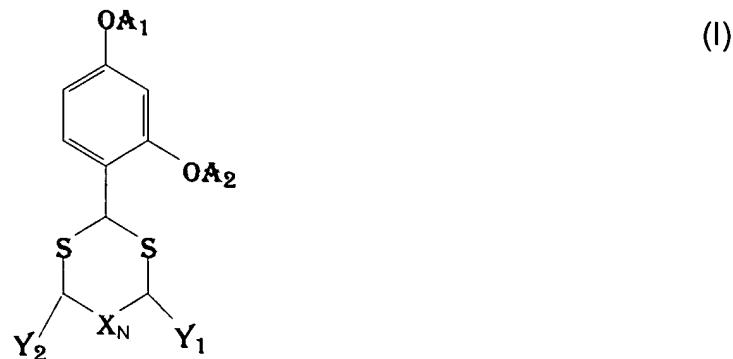
12. The cosmetic composition of claim 8, further comprising a sunscreen.

13. The cosmetic composition of claim 10, wherein the hydroxy groups of said compound are esterified with an acid selected from the group consisting of ferulic acid, vanillic acid, sebacic acid, azaleic acid, benzoic acid, caffeic acid, coumaric acid, salicylic acid, cysteine, cystine, lactic acid, glycolic acid and mixtures thereof.

5

14. A compound of general formula I

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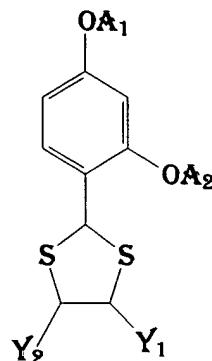
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Wherein
each A_1 and/or A_2 independently is = H, COR, CO₂R ,CONHR where R= C₁-C₁₈ saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon; and
each Y_1 and/or Y_2 independently is H, C₁-C₁₈ saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon, or OZ where Z = H, COR¹, CO₂R¹ ,CONHR¹ and wherein R¹= C₁-C₁₈ saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon;
X is Carbon, Nitrogen, Sulfur, or Oxygen; and
N is in integer between 0 and 2.

15. The compound of claim 14, having a general formula II:

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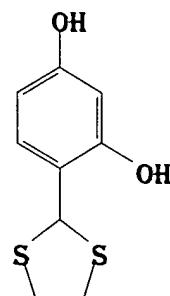


(II)

16. A compound of claim 14, having the formula III:

15

20



(III)

17. The compound of claim 16, wherein the hydroxy groups of said compound
are esterified with an acid selected from the group consisting of ferulic acid,
25 vanillic acid, sebacic acid, azaleic acid, benzoic acid, caffeic acid, coumaric
acid, salicylic acid, cysteine, cystine, lactic acid, glycolic acid and mixtures
thereof.

18. A process for synthesizing 4-[2'-(1',3'-dithiacyclopenty)]-1,3-dihydroxybenzene, 4-[2'-(1',3'-dithiacyclohexy)]-1,3-dihydroxybenzene, 4-[2'-(1',3'-dithiacyclohepty)]-1,3-dihydroxybenzene, or mixtures thereof comprising:

reacting

(a) 2,4-dihydroxy benzaldehyde; with
10 (b) 1,2-Dimercaptoethane, 1,3-Dimercaptopropane, 1,4-Dimercaptobutane, or mixtures thereof, respectively;

in the presence of an acid catalyst;

15 wherein said acid catalyst is selected from the group consisting of methane sulfonic acid, p-toluene sulfonic acid, sulfuric acid, hydrochloric acid, acidic resins and mixtures thereof.